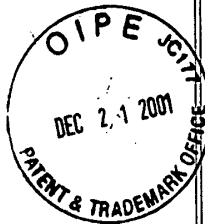


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PATENT
Customer No. 22,852
Attorney Docket No. 04208.0083



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Masahiro YAMAMOTO

Serial No.: 09/648,372

Filed: August 25, 2000

For: PATTERN INSPECTION
APPARATUS, PATTERN
INSPECTION METHOD, AND
RECORDING MEDIUM

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

Sir:

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.97(b)

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.56 and 1.97(b), applicant brings to the attention of the Examiner the documents listed on the attached PTO 1449. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits for the above-referenced application.

Copies of the listed documents, including any copending patent applications, are attached.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider the listed documents and indicate that they were considered by making appropriate notations on the attached form.

The following is a concise statement of relevance of the non-English language document, "Automatic Failure Part Tracing Method for a Logic LSI Using an Electron

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Beam Tester", NEC Technical Report, Vol. 50, No. 6, pp. 21-31, 1997. This reference discloses, as is discussed in the specification of the present application at p. 3, line 19- p. 4, line 10, a method with the use of a projection of wiring edges on the x- and y- axes; a method where wiring corners are focused on; and a method where a genetic algorithm is applied. There is also described a method where, after edges have undergone the linear approximation, closed areas are extracted, and those closed areas are used for an inspection. These methods, however, cannot attain an inspection speed that is usable in high-speed inspection, and cannot perform the matching while detecting the deformation quantity of the pattern. A partial translation of this reference is also provided.

In lieu of a statement of relevance or translation of the other non-English documents, an English language abstract of the non-English documents is submitted in accordance with Manual of Patent Examining Procedure § 609.III.A.3.

This submission does not represent that a search has been made or that no better art exists and does not constitute an admission that each or all of the listed documents are material or constitute "prior art." If the Examiner applies any of the documents as prior art against any claim in the application and applicant determines that the cited documents do not constitute "prior art" under United States law, applicant reserves the right to present to the office the relevant facts and law regarding the appropriate status of such documents.

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Applicant further reserves the right to take appropriate action to establish the patentability of the disclosed invention over the listed documents, should one or more of the documents be applied against the claims of the present application.

If there is any fee due in connection with the filing of this Statement, please charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: December 21, 2001

By: 

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